

# Regional Conservation Partnership Program

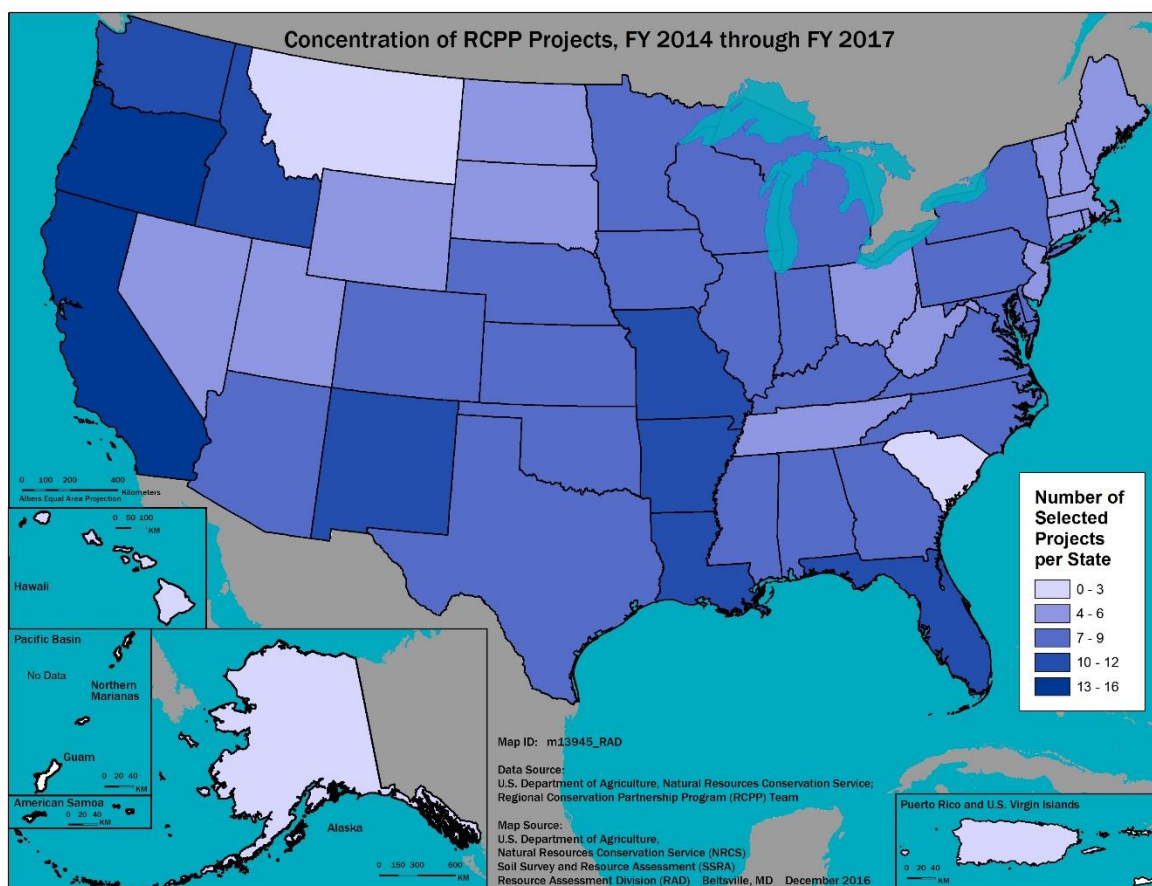
Investing in Connecticut



## Regional Conservation Partnership Program

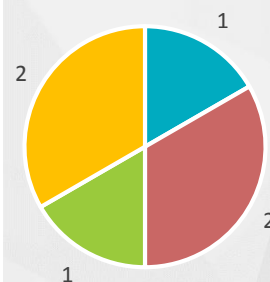
Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven, locally-led approach to conservation. It offers new opportunities for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to harness innovation, welcome new partners to the conservation mission, and demonstrates the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2017, NRCS is investing up to \$225 million in 88 projects that impact nearly every state in the nation, including one in Connecticut. Since 2014, NRCS has invested more than \$825 million in 286 high-impact projects, bringing together more than 2,000 conservation partners who have invested an additional \$1.4 billion. By 2018, NRCS and partners will have invested at least \$2.4 billion. These projects are leading to cleaner and more abundant water, better soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, more resilient and productive agricultural lands and stronger rural economies.



### Connecticut Projects to Date

#### Projects by Resource Concern



- Soil Health
- Water Quality
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Quantity/Drought

6

Projects

\$22.8

million

NRCS Investment

46

Partners

## Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	Path to Reduce Pathogens in CT Agricultural Runoff	State	University of Connecticut	4	\$669,000
2016	The Young Forest Initiative for At-Risk Species	National	Wildlife Management Institute	12	\$5.2 million
2014/2015	Achieving Agricultural Water Security in Connecticut Through RCPP	State	University Of Connecticut	7	\$400,000
2014/2015	Improving Soil Health & Water Quality in the Thames River Watershed	State	The Last Green River Valley, Inc.	4	\$400,000
2014/2015	Long Island Sound Watershed RCPP	National	Connecticut Council on Soil and Water Conservation	7	\$10 million

## 2017 RCPP Projects

### Accelerating the Pace of Conservation in the Southern New England Heritage Forest

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$6,144,000 (National)

Lead Partner: The Last Green Valley, Inc.

Number of Initial Partners: 12

Participating States: Connecticut (Lead State)

The Southern New England Heritage Forest is a uniquely-positioned forest corridor stretching north along the Connecticut and Rhode Island border to the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts. Spanning the shared borders of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th most densely populated states in the country, SNEHF contains 68 towns and covers 1.49 million acres, of which a remarkable 76% still remains in forest and high-priority forested wildlife habitat. Between 2011 and 2017, federal and non-profit organizations conducted extensive forest landowner outreach in this region, establishing an informed network of “Woodland Ambassadors” and educated and engaged landowners interested in improving and conserving their forested properties. This SNEHF project will connect these forest landowners, who would not traditionally interact with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, with NRCS programs and services. A remarkable partnership of non-profit organizations and regional, state and municipal agencies will offer private woodland owners a suite of NRCS tools for sound management and forestry conservation practices through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and permanent protection through easements under the Healthy Forests Reserve Program. This project will serve as a “conservation pipeline” of forest and bird habitat plans, EQIP practices and HFRP easements on private forestlands in order to accelerate the pace of conservation in SNEHF.

